



TOWN OF TEWKSBURY

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

1009 MAIN STREET

TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01876

Main Line: 978.640.4470

Fax: 978.640.4472

Nurse's Line: 978.640.4473

health@tewbury-ma.gov

July 13, 2022

Shannon Gillis, RS/REHS
Director of Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Cyanobacteria Algae Bloom in Long Pond

The Tewksbury Health Department has identified a cyanobacteria algae bloom in **Long Pond (end of Pleasant St. along Whipple Rd. and pond St.)** Regularly scheduled water testing was performed on Long Pond. The results confirmed presence of cyanobacteria (algae) cells that exceed the MA Dept. of Public Health (MDPH) guidelines for recreational waterbodies in Massachusetts. Per MDPH recommendations, public advisories were posted at all public access points to the pond to notify residents that water should be avoided. There will be monthly testing conducted to monitor the levels of the algae bloom. MDPH requires two samples below the guideline level to be taken, one week apart, to recommend rescinding the advisory.

The following should be avoided:

- Swimming
- Fishing
- Kayaking/boating
- Pets avoid water as it is very harmful

Algae blooms can be caused by:

- Warm weather
- Sunlight
- Excess nutrients in the water such as fertilizer and human/animal waste
- Storm runoff
- Failing septic systems

Health concerns from harmful algae blooms vary depending on the type of exposure and the amounts:

- Contact with these algae can cause skin and eye irritation
- Ingesting small amounts can cause gastrointestinal symptoms. Ingesting large amounts of toxins may cause liver or neurological damage
- Inhaling water spray with algae in it can cause asthma-like symptoms

- Small children and pets are more susceptible to the effects of toxins than adults. Livestock and pet deaths from ingesting algal toxins have occurred. Dogs should be rinsed off immediately if they come into contact with an algae bloom

If you believe you or your pet came into contact with these algae, you should immediately wash yourself/pet with clean water and contact your primary care physician or veterinarian.

Signs will be posted at all access points. The Tewksbury Health Department is advising residents and their pets to avoid contact with this water until the advisory is lifted. The Tewksbury Health Department will advise the public once the advisory is lifted.

For more information, please visit the Town's website: www.tewksbury-ma.gov/cyanobacteria

"When in Doubt, Stay Out"

More information can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/harmful-algae><https://www.mass.gov/info-details/harmful-algae-blooms-in-fresh-water-bodies>[blooms in fresh-water bodies](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/harmful-algae-blooms-in-fresh-water-bodies)